



The INTERACT Newsletter

Spring 2014

Message from the Chair

By Jhenifer Morfitt, Department of Fish and Wildlife



Over the last couple years, we, as state employees, have been immersed in Lean training and practices, tasked with finding more innovative ways

to provide the best service to the public in all areas of our work. In doing so, we strive to make positive changes throughout Washington. The foundation for these efforts is outlined in Results Washington, a strategic framework that identifies and measures what is most important to Washingtonians: Results.

State employees work hard every day to provide services on behalf of and for the benefit of everyone in the state. Whether it be educating our children, protecting our natural resources, ensuring a prosperous economy, or building healthy and safe communities, we play an active role in the wellbeing of our state and citizens trust us to do our best in this work. It's not only important that our efforts are made with the best of intentions, but that, at the end of the day, we have a meaningful impact in improving the lives of those we serve.

I believe all members of a society have a responsibility to be accountable for their actions, and state employees are often called to double duty in this regard.

That is one reason Results Washington is so important. We provide essential services and support in much needed areas such as transportation, human

services, wildlife conservation, public safety, etc.; through Results Washington, we have an opportunity to help the public understand the valuable contributions we provide. Also, by taking strides to do it better, we build trust to continue doing it because the value added is clearly defined and tracked.

Life is driven by a series of causes and effects. By knowing what results (effects) we want to achieve, we can more effectively make decisions and take actions (causes) that will likely lead to the result we intended. With these common goals, we ensure we are moving in a direction that allows us all to thrive. Through Lean practices, we can increase our confidence to try new approaches, share innovations, and be a part of the solutions to the challenges we face. From my experience, state employees are passionate and dedicated people who strive to help others.

Take a few minutes to identify how your job ties into Results Washington, attend Lean trainings, and engage with co-workers on solutions to shared problems. No matter your position or role in state government, you are an integral part of our overall success and since you know your business best, you will likely be the best person to find the best way to accomplish your tasks better. By taking responsibility, choosing actions that focus on positive results, and working together, I hope you find further assurance that your work directly and greatly benefits others...and everyone will know it.

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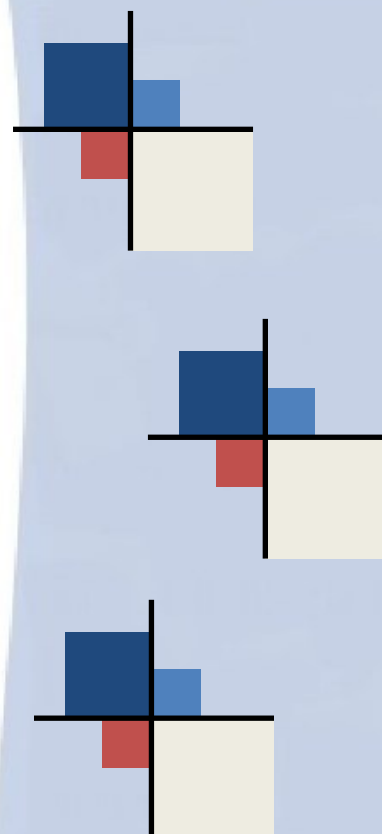
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State Employees are Learning Lean and Showing Results

By Wendy Korthuis-Smith, Director, Results Washington

“Fix what bugs you.” That’s how company president, Paul Akers, described the Lean philosophy to more than 2,000 state employees at the most recent Results Washington conference.

The message clearly resonated. Although much work remains to be done, a growing number of state employees and leaders are using Lean principles and tools to make a difference for their customers and themselves.

Here are a few examples:

◇ The Office of the Chief Information Officer brought together 11 agencies to work on a joint system for addresses, reducing duplication of work across multiple parts of state government.

◇ Working together, employees at the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and the Health Care Authority (HCA), refined the process to recover overpayments to providers. The changes cut processing time in half.

◇ The HCA’s Medical Assistance Customer Service Center staff used Lean process improvements to dramatically reduce a backlog of 400 unresolved client complaints about providers by more than 70 percent.

Many other efforts are underway, too. Employees at the Washington State Patrol, working with the Department of Enterprise Services, improved the Patrol’s online recruiting system. The Department of Transportation’s sign shop in Yakima increased sign production 200 percent. The Liquor Control Board used Lean to find ways to better inform license applicants of the status of their applications, which reduced calls by 92 percent.

These improvements are going on largely behind the scenes of state government. Many of the best ideas are coming from the people closest to the work.

They’re learning Lean thinking, fixing what bugs them and improving outcomes for everyone in the process. To date, nearly 5,000 managers and 14,000 state employees have received some Lean training.



We’re also fortunate to be getting considerable help from our private-sector and public-sector partners. Results Washington, which is part of the Governor’s Office, has recruited more than 170 Lean experts from 70 organizations to deliver training, coaching and expertise to state employees, all at no cost to the state. Those partners include Starbucks, Alaska Airlines, Group Health Cooperative, Virginia Mason, and Seattle Children’s Hospital.

Interested in learning more? Please see www.results.wa.gov and consider joining our free “Lean Practitioners Community of Practice.” It meets monthly to provide free training and Lean advice, and is geared for anyone from a novice to an expert. To join, send an email to Results@gov.wa.gov with the words “Join listserv” as the subject. We’d be happy to include you.

Get Ready to L.E.A.R.N.

Leading by Example to Achieve Results Now

Join us for our Annual Conference!

September 29, 2014
Tacoma, WA

Don't miss out—registration starts July 1.


Early registration:	July 1–30	\$ 75
Regular registration:	Aug. 1–Sept. 22	\$100

Lunch included with registration

For more information, check out:
<http://icsew.wa.gov/conferences/>

Top 5 reasons you should attend:

- Education and training to propel your life to the next level.
- Opportunities to expand your network and circle of influence.
- Career advice from leading experts and entrepreneurs to become a more impactful leader.
- Re-energize from our amazing speakers and attendees.
- It's a great value!



Presented by the Interagency Committee of State Employed Women

Keynote Speaker

Brooke Hamilton, Sustainability Projects Manager, Department of Transportation

By Cindy Varley, School for the Blind

ICSEW was pleased to have Brooke Hamilton present at the January general membership meeting. Brooke has worked for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in Olympia, Washington for ten years. She currently works in the Public Transportation Division as the Sustainability Projects Manager. Recently, Brooke helped implement and lead a two-phased telework pilot project, which targeted over 300 employees. As a result, the department's revised telework policy is now supported by department executives and three labor Unions! Brooke presented her program to ICSEW which included a complete breakdown from pre-pilot planning through agency policy implementation.

To start with, Brooke determined that she had to identify the right managers to support her ideas, look at the business advantages, and establish sustainable goals. She identified upper managers who would become "fans" of the project. These managers supported her efforts throughout the entire telework pilot program and promoted the concepts to frontline supervisors. She continued the planning phase with regular informational meetings with managers and separate sessions to gain employee engagement. Throughout the process Brooke learned that separating managerial, supervisory, and employee trainings seemed to be more comfortable and advantageous for all participants.

Brooke's two phased approach to her telework pilot project worked well for her large agency. She started small and safe by identifying a division that had some telework experience and employees with similar job functions. She gathered the data, refined her goals, and moved onto Phase 2. During Phase 2, she expanded the participation to include more divisions with employees who had little or no telework experience. She found that managers and employees responded well to program benefits including the implementation of an accountability

portion to the policy. Therefore, employee productivity levels increased.

Finally, Brooke put her time in the planning stages to determine that a new policy would need to include agency benefits, manager benefits, and employee benefits. By the end of the telework pilot project, she found that the benefits were far greater than her original expectations! As previously stated, managers saw more accountability during telework status and in the office. Both participating and non-participating employees also found benefits to the new telework program, including being more productive. Below is a list of positive advantages the teleworking program provided state employees:

The agency saw:

- Increased office morale
- Improved workload organization and prioritization
- A reduction in commute travel and office energy consumption
- A reduction in participant personal leave use
- Increased employee retention

Participants responded with:

- An improved work-life balance
- Monetary savings
- Happier while on the job
- A feeling of being more productive and accountable

To find out more information on Brooke's telework pilot project program outcomes and useful information on piloting and implementing your own agency's telework policy, please feel free to contact your ICSEW agency representative or Brooke Hamilton.

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Living with Rheumatoid Arthritis

By Rachel Kramer

One summer I began having immense pain and swelling in my joints. After persistent pain, swelling and stiffness, I finally ventured to the doctor. At the young age of 22, I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. I thought, "But I'm only in my 20's!"

Rheumatoid Arthritis is a debilitating autoimmune disease that causes inflammation and swelling in the joints and surrounding tissues. The immune system, which is designed to protect our body, instead attacks the body's own joints and tissues. This causes pain, swelling, stiffness, fatigue, and even a low grade fever. These are the symptoms I experience. However, I know that other people with this disease also experience many other symptoms as well.

For a few years, I tried multiple medications. While some medications worked, they unfortunately made me very sick. Over the years, I have gone into remission a couple of times. However, the rheumatoid arthritis always comes back. Luckily, I have a great support group of family and friends to help get me through some of the tough times.

Since I'm unable to take medications that are currently on the market, I have found other ways to help ease the pain and discomfort when I have a rheumatoid arthritis flare-up. One thing that really helps is stretching and yoga. Taking a warm bath, or putting a hot pack on the affected area also helps. There are some especially useful stretches I have found that help with the pain in my fingers and hands. (Suggestions can be found online at: www.healthline.com).

Rheumatoid arthritis is a debilitating and painful disease. However, with the support of family and friends, I'm able to make it through some of the more

Love the One You're With (That's You!)

By Betty Lochner

Are you your own worst enemy? You may not think you are, but how you treat yourself can make a huge difference in how you communicate with others.

In fact, whether we like it or not, what you believe about yourself is who you are.

If you aren't always your own best friend, here are five ways you can learn to love the one you're with.

1. **Be self-aware.** Listen to your inner chatter. What do you find yourself thinking? Are you thinking negative thoughts about yourself? Catch yourself and make a change.
2. **Pause.** When you hear yourself thinking and talking negatively, take a breath and do something calming and positive. Go for a short walk, listen to music, or find something else that makes you happy and relaxed. You can control your self-talk!
3. **Keep a gratitude journal.** Write down all the positive things you have in your life and all that you are grateful for daily. Give yourself affirmations for all that is going well in your life. Focus on the positive.
4. **Reverse negative thoughts.** Try to explain things to yourself differently. For example, rather than beat yourself up when someone says you did something wrong, tell yourself, "I am a good person who just made a mistake, that's all."

5. **Surround yourself with positive people.** Hang out with people who think positively. Positive people can be a big support system if you let them.

Be patient with yourself. A habit of negative self talk won't go away over night. Take some baby steps and start with just one of these strategies. And, be nice to yourself next Valentine's Day! ■



Submitted By: Sharon Lotonuu, WA Emergency Management Division

The convective weather season starts this month, and as the days get longer and warmer, the air above remains cool. This combination creates an unstable air mass leading to showers, hail, and thunderstorms. The impacts from such storms can include flooding, power outages, and disruptions to transportation. We encourage all Washington residents to recognize and prepare for these hazards.



According to the National Weather Service (NWS), a severe thunderstorm can produce hail at least three-quarters of an inch thick and produce winds of 59 mph or greater.

Be ready for this stormy season by preparing your loved ones and preparing your home for disasters. *During a storm*, quickly move indoors to protect yourself from the potential of being struck by lightning, which is a common and dangerous occurrence during thunderstorms.



Lightning frequently occurs during thunderstorms and can be deadly. According to the National Weather Service, twenty-eight people across the United States were killed by lightning strikes in 2012, and twenty-seven people were struck and killed by lightning in 2011.

Before a storm occurs, become familiar with the actions you will need to take during a storm. Learn how to reduce your risk if you are outdoors *during a storm*

and teach your loved ones important safety tips when indoors.



Though not as frequent as in other parts of the country - tornadoes do occur in our state. Last year for example, news agencies reported on the Puyallup F1 tornado that had wind speeds of up to 110 mph and caused significant damage and power outages in the area.

A tornado is part of a severe convective storm and can occur any time of the year, especially in the spring when warmer, moist air near the surface interacts with the cooler air above. During the convective weather season, be sure to use a weather radio with an alert feature to get tornado and severe weather alerts and warnings. *If a tornado approaches* seek shelter inside immediately. Move into an interior room or basement until the storm has passed.



Floods and flash floods can occur as a result of the storms that are frequent during the convective weather season. Heavy rains from thunderstorms can cause flash floods and damage roadways.

Be safe - *do not drive into a flooded roadway*. The water depth is easy to misjudge and the road itself may be damaged or destroyed underneath. It only takes about 1 to 2 feet of water to float most vehicles. ■

Are You Prepared?

Vehicle Preparedness and Safety

By Sharon Lotonuu, WA Emergency Management Division

There are two types of preparedness kits you should have in your car at all times - a vehicle safety kit and a personal survival kit. Below are suggested items to include in each kit. Items should be stored in airtight plastic bags inside storage containers.

Vehicle Safety Kit



ABC-type fire extinguisher
Battery-operated radio/extra batteries
Cat litter/sand for traction on ice/snow
Chains
Compass
Flashlight/extra batteries
Ice scraper
Jumper cables
Utility knife
Latex gloves (at least 2 pair)
Light sticks
Map of area
Matches in waterproof container
Plastic shelter types
Plastic storage bags
Road flares
Shovel

Personal Survival Kit

- Blankets - Mylar and other
- Food - Choose whole grain cereals, nuts, energy bars and food with high liquid content; avoid food that makes you thirsty. *Remember a portable can opener if you pack canned food.*
- Water - 1 gallon per person, for 24-hour period. *Write date on all food / water, replace every 6 months.*
- Warm clothes - Gloves, hat, sturdy shoes, jacket, rain gear, etc.
- Cold weather clothes - Boots, winter gloves, wool socks, clothing that can be layered. Blankets - Mylar and other

In addition:

First aid kit / special medications
Cash, coins for phones
Cell phone
Whistle
Games / books for kids
Pet supplies
Toilet paper / towelettes
Feminine / personal hygiene items
Infant diapers and wipes
Infant formula
Special diet foods

Real Cowboys Still Exist

By Sharon Lotonuu, WA Emergency Management Division

Kit McLean Cramer grew up on the beautiful sprawling countryside of Methow Valley in Okanogan County. She grew up with great aspirations of becoming a cowboy. Fortunately for her, her wish came true in working for Claude Miller, a local rancher, who has the largest herd of horses in the Pacific Northwest.

As a wrangler, part of her daily duties are to wrangle, transport, train, feed; and care for over 400 horses provided for children's summer camps. In addition, she trail rides concessions and High Mountain pack trips. Thirty years later, she still works for Claude Miller as lead wrangler, and business partner.

When asked why she calls herself a cowboy and not a cowgirl, she states, "It's simple, they both do the same thing."

When asked, "How you do this modern cowboy work?" Kit acknowledges that her childhood upbringing, bucking up, and sense of self-respect all helped aid her with modern cowboy work. She goes on to say, "People make mistakes—things are going to happen, take the initiative to try things."

She also added that a big part of being an empowered woman is not waiting for someone else, to ask questions, laugh at yourself, and to think on your feet—which is becoming a lost art, and as change happens—you have to be able to adapt to what the change is. She also adds that good luck is recognizing an opportunity and making it work for you.

Kit is also an established photographer and pays tribute to working horses and glimpses into their lives as they play, eat, sleep and run loose on the range. In addition, she currently runs Kit's Livery Stable which

is a "Horse Hotel" for people coming to ride the trails of the Methow Valley.

A local legend in the area, whose valley roots extend back four generations, Kit is also an accomplished writer of *Bound for the Methow*, which captures a visual mirror of the Methow Valley's history and culture. In 1886, the Methow Valley was one of the later places opened for the Homestead Act.

The book contains more than 300 historical photographs from the Shafer Historical Museum's collection—many of which were contributed by the early settlers of the following towns; Winthrop, Twisp, Silver, Mazama, and Carlton. For more information, visit: www.shafermuseum.com. ■

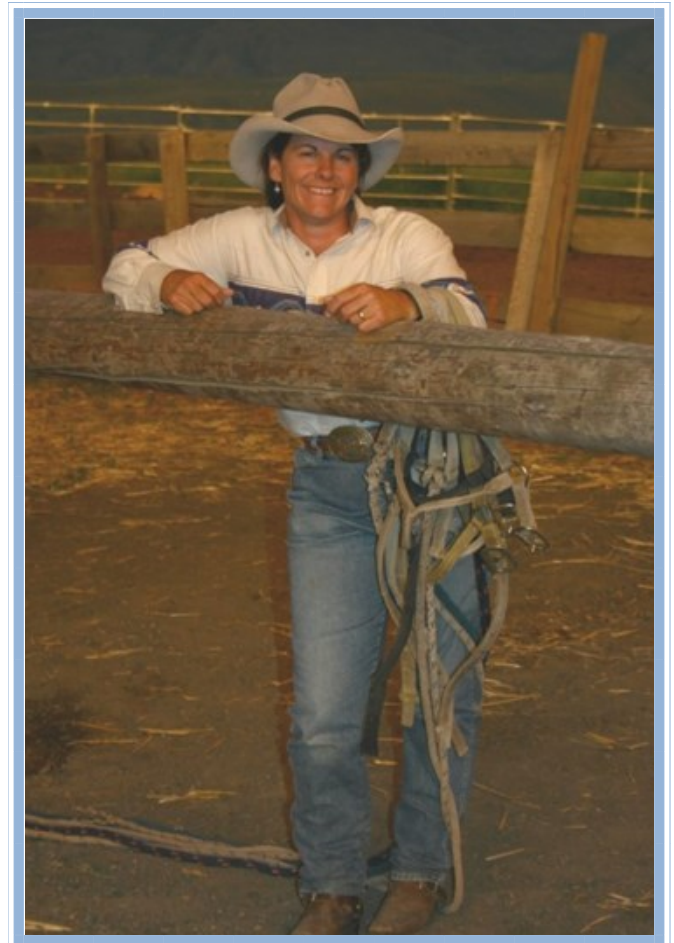


Photo by: Hank Cramer

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About Brooke Hamilton:

Brooke Hamilton has worked for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in Olympia, Washington for ten years. She currently works in the Public Transportation Division as the Sustainability Projects Manager. Brooke leads the implementation of the department's Sustainability efforts, which includes the telework policy; an annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory; climate change adaptation; and a greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy. She coordinates and communicates with department experts and works closely with executive leadership involved in sustainability efforts. Brooke leads an informal telework committee with representation of state government from Human Resources, Information Technology, and local government.

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About Betty Lochner

Communication specialist, author, and professional speaker, Betty teaches individuals and organizations how to make small changes in how they communicate that make huge differences in their relationships at work and home - improving morale, confidence and productivity. ■

Did You Know?

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Barb Ursini, Webmaster
Office of Financial Management

took an idea of a telework pilot, to leading and implementing a two phase pilot targeting over 300 employees that is today now the department's revised telework policy supported by department executives and three labor Unions.

Prior to this position, she worked at WSDOT as a Fish and Wildlife Biologist Liaison at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a Wetland Biologist in the Advance Mitigation Program. Before she joined the Environmental Services Division, Brooke contributed to the development of WSDOT's renowned quarterly performance report (The Gray Notebook) and benchmarks for the state transportation system. Brooke has her Bachelors in Science with an emphasis in marine biology. She is a mother of two, enjoys reading, gardening, and soaking up sunshine whenever she can. ■

We can feature your agency in our "**Agency in the Spotlight**"
If you like to write, and would like to have your agency featured in the ICSEW *InterAct* and are not a member, we welcome your contribution.

If you like to write, or have something you would like to see published in the ICSEW *InterAct* and are not a member of the ICSEW, we welcome your contributions. All persons interested in submitting articles or ideas to this publication should contact their agency's ICSEW representative or any member of the Communications Subcommittee (<http://icsew.wa.gov/communications.asp>)